

March 17, 2003

**Public Notice for 401 Certification
and/or
Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)
Sonoma County Water Agency Wohler Forestville Pipeline Project,
WDID No. 1B02157WNSO
Sonoma County**

On September 18, 2002, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Sonoma County Water agency requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Wohler-Forestville Pipeline Project in Sonoma County. The application was deemed complete on January 15, 2003. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the state associated with Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 14.11

The proposed project is located approximately 10 miles northwest of the City of Santa Rosa and 2 miles north of Forestville in an unincorporated area of Sonoma County, California. The project is located between Wohler Road and the Russian River, and between Mark West Creek and the Agency's facility at Wohler. The purpose of the project is to connect the Agency's Wohler Facilities to the Russian River-Cotati Intertie. The project is needed because the existing transmission system cannot efficiently or reliably transport the standby capacity from Collector No. 6 to the Russian River Intertie.

The proposed project consists of the construction, operation and maintenance of an underground pipeline between the Agency's Wohler facility and the Russian River-Cotati Intertie. The pipeline would extend from the Agency's Wohler Maintenance Yard, south toward the confluence of Mark West creek and the Russian River. The pipeline would connect to the existing Russian River-Cotati Intertie near Mark West creek.

The completed pipeline would consist of approximately 7,000 linear feet of 54-inch to 60 inch diameter, mortar-lined and coated steel pipe, and appurtenances. Construction of the pipeline would require excavation of a trench 8 to 12 feet deep and 9 to 10 feet wide along the entire length of the pipeline. Following construction, the trench would be restored to original grade. No above-ground structures would be associated with the pipeline.

An access area approximately 50 feet wide with an overhead clearance of 50 feet would be required along the entire length of the pipeline during construction, but no new permanent roads would be required. Vegetation within the 50-foot access corridor would be removed during construction. Following construction, trenches would be filled to original grade and vegetation would be replaced or allowed to naturally re-establish, except within a 20-foot exclusion zone centered on the pipeline. Few trees exist within the proposed pipeline route because the majority of construction would occur in existing public roadways and/or agriculture lands on a terrace adjacent to the Russian River and Mark West Creek.

There will be approximately 0.003 acres of wetlands temporarily impacted. There will be no permanent impacts. The project will comply with all the requirements of non-notify Nationwide permit #12. The project would be constructed within the wetland area during the dry season, when the drainage is dry. A jack and bore tunneling method will be used to avoid disturbance to waters of the state. Following installation of the pipeline, the trenches will be backfilled to original grade with native material to help restore surface drainage and subsurface permeability.

There would be no Compensatory mitigation for this project.

Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of BMPs. Erosion control measures include, but are not limited to, silt fences and straw bales placed long the base of exposed slopes, around surface water features, and around site margins; and revegetation of cut slopes with annual grasses and/or legumes facilitated by mulching, hydroseeding, and/or geotextile fabric.

The Sonoma County Water Agency as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for a Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The nearest receiving water is Mark West creek and the Russian River located in the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 14.11.

The Wohler-Forestville pipeline project is scheduled to begin April 2003 and will be completed by October 2003. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Andrew Jensen at (707) 576-2683, or at jensa@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.